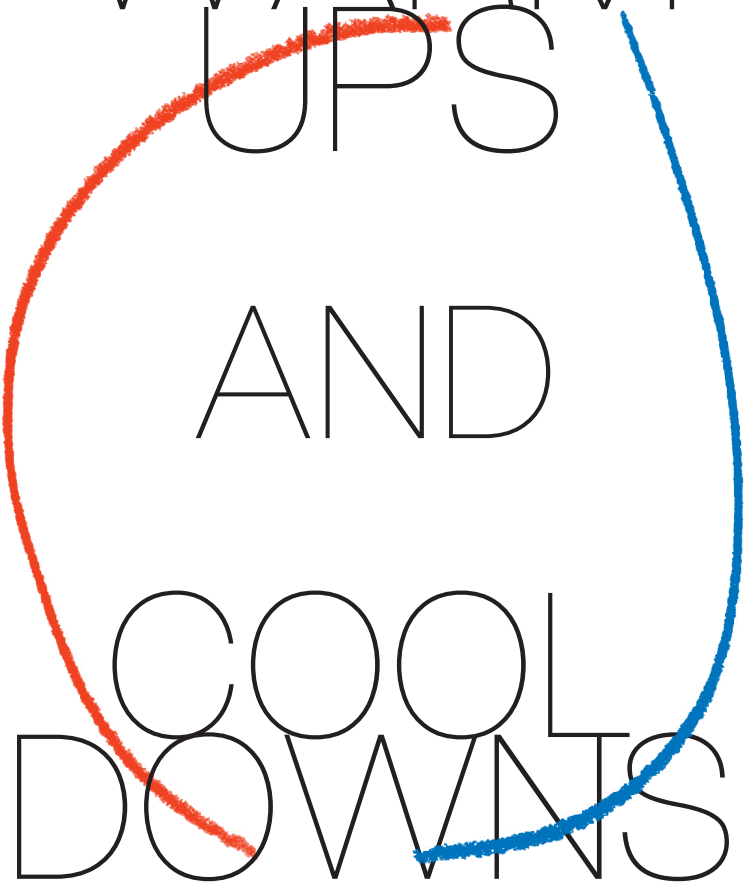
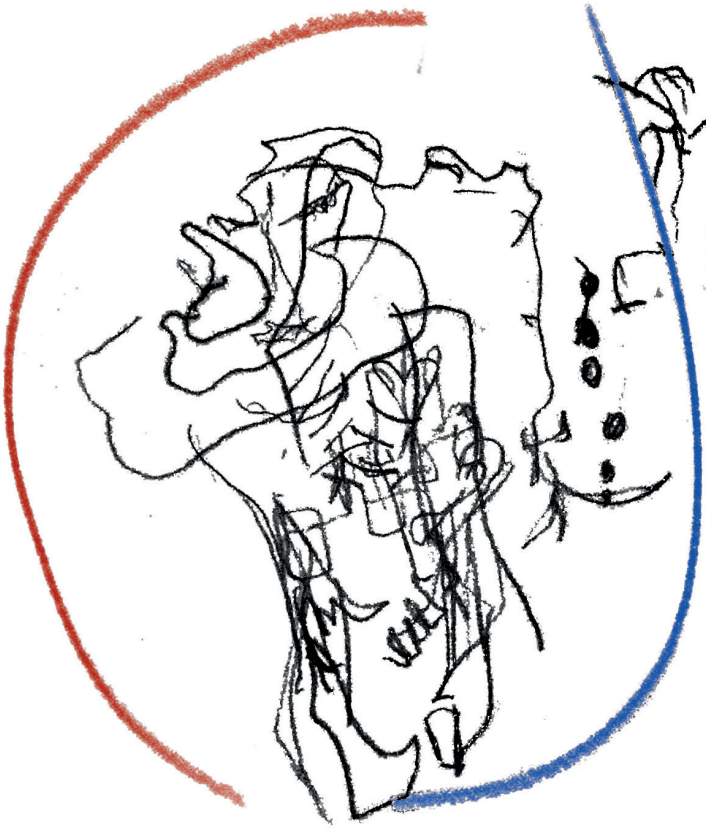
WARM UPS AND COOL DOWNS



Eirini Sourgiadaki

HumDrumPress



*School of Commons (SoC) is an initiative dedicated to the study and development of self-directed Peer Learning, located at the Zurich University of the Arts. SoC represents an international community of practitioners, artists, designers and researchers who focus on matters surrounding the production and mediation of knowledge.

ABOUT WARMUPS AND COOLDOWNS

The publication in your hands is a collection of warmup and cooldown ideas contributed by a selection of School of Commons* 2022 Fellows. This pamphlet and its contents respond to the necessity to reclaim time and space within and beyond the curriculum and the working day. Imagine it as an intro and an outro, a foreword and a conclusion, a prologue and an epilogue that occurs smoothly and effortlessly during one's time in the class, in the studio, in the atelier, at the rehearsal room, at the desk, in the office. We need this time and space to allow ourselves to slow down. Not only to make space to build and share artistic practices and interests, but to provide room for sensory experiences and embodied ways of knowing.

The concept of warmups and cooldowns is the simple and essential engagement of the bodymind in the process of nurturing motivation and drive. This collection remains, and will remain, open for contributions by interested persons in order to foster exchange and play within the frame of short-format sets that contain an open-ended character and an undefined research focus.

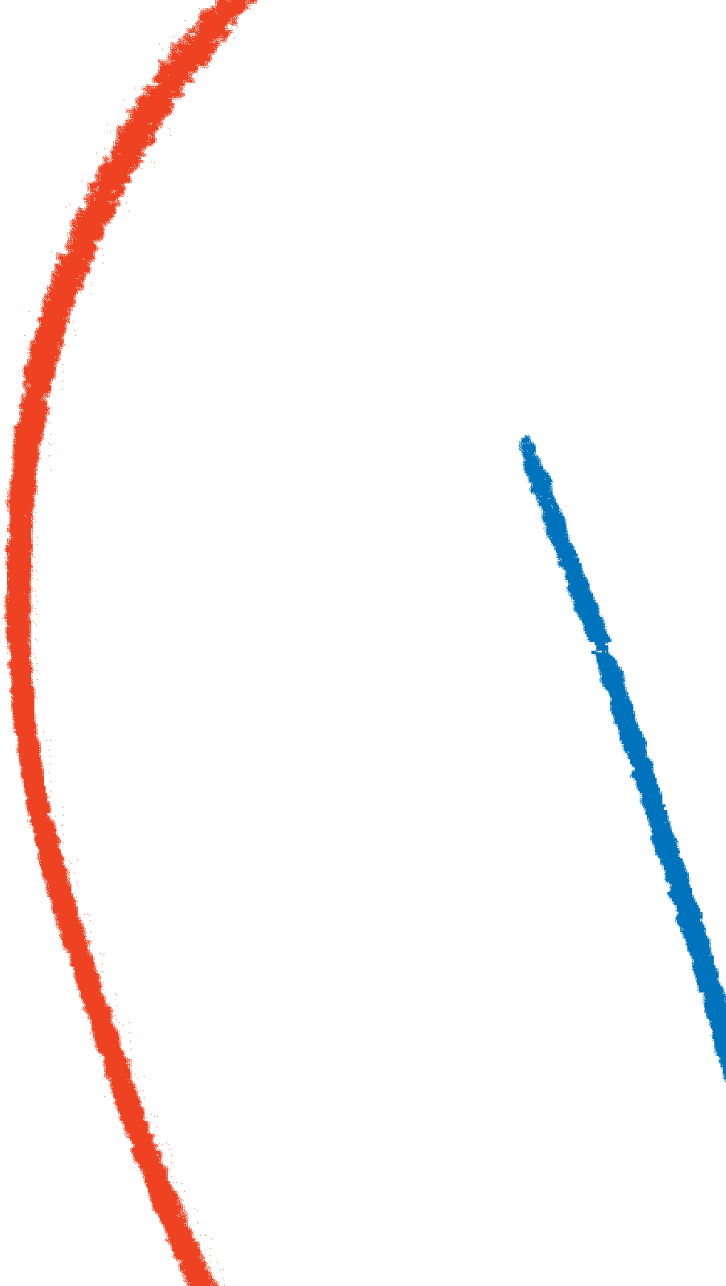
All of the warmup and cooldown ideas collected in this pamphlet have an artistic character, are non-exclusive and are open for a wide audience-base to use individually or within a group; ie. as part of meditation, breathing exercises, storytelling, music and sound, movement instructions, walking, dancing, hypnosis, or any kind of improvisation or experimental tryout proposals, and with instructions or no instructions at all.

For the warmups and cooldowns, all are welcome.

The only requirement that was communicated to each contributor was to provide a framework and/or abstract–or–systematic potentiality for poiesis (making, creating) in a broader sense as part of their exercise.

This pamphlet can be used in any way that makes you feel comfortable. You are invited to select a page at random and follow the instructions, or to go through each warmup or cooldown, one after the other, and choose the one that fits your needs on a given day. Or treat them as one singular compilation. Although the warmups and cooldowns are each indicatively marked, all of the sets can be used as either a warmup or a cooldown and can be adjusted in any possible way.

You are more than welcome to add your warmup/cooldown ideas to this ongoing collection; please send an email to warmupscooldowns@schoolofcommons.org to get in touch.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

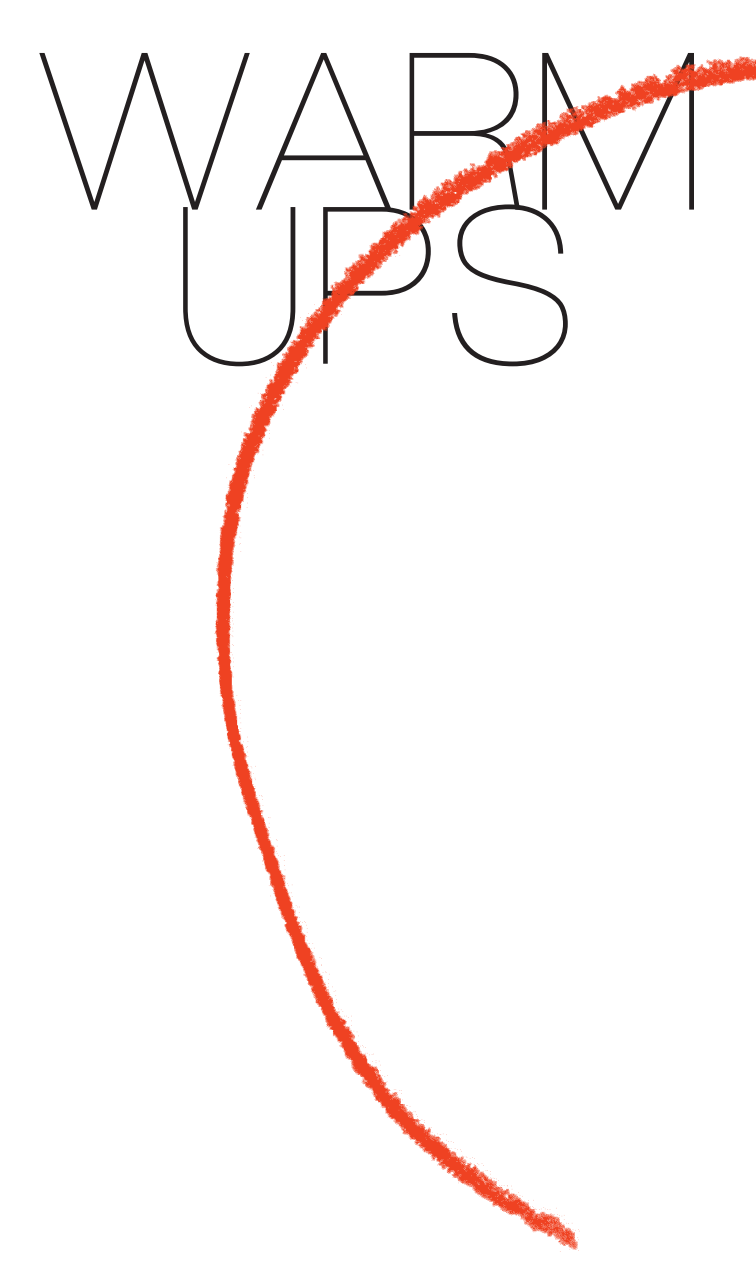
Eirini Sourgiadaki works across and through a number of art practices, including literature, poetry & storytelling, perfomance and installation, to name a few. She is living between Zürich and Athens, and was born in Crete.

Eirini is a research associate for the MA Transdisziplinarität at Zürich University of the Arts. She studied Sociology and Cultural Management at the Departments of Sociology and Media & Communication respectively, both at Panteion University for Social & Political Science, Athens, and Transdisciplinarity in the Arts. She has studied Greek and English & American poetry and has a yearlong experience in movement practices.

Eirni is currently pursuing a PhD in practice-based artistic research (ZHdK-Linz) with a special focus on Teleportation & Transformation through Storytelling and Technology.

Find out more at eirinisourgiadaki.com

WARM UPS



COOL
DOWNS

Engy Mohsen

DOG DAYS ARE OVER*

This exercise is best used as a warmup during long working sessions, especially with a group, to renew your energy levels.

One person must guide and set the rhythm for the group.

Everyone stands in a circle, not too close and not too far from each other.

The guide then asks everyone to bend their knees so that they slightly lower themselves.

Place each hand in front of you on the top of each thigh.

The guide sets a rhythm to mimic the sound of the stomping feet of a horse.

Gently, slap your thighs with your hands to create that sound together.

Everyone else must try to follow the rhythm while keeping the knees bent.

This warmup continues for about three minutes, or until someone's thighs start to hurt.

Slowly go back to a standing posture.
Then, back to work.

*The name for this warmup is derived from a Florence + The Machine song that I used to frequently listen to during a certain period of my life. It has a line that says:

The dog days are done
Can you hear the horses?
'Cause here they come

Lili Huston-Herterich

THE STUDIO WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

A warmup for the studio:

Begin with a mantra.
Here are some suggestions:

I AM CAPABLE
MINIMISE MY APATHY
DON‘T REPENT, REPLY
THERE IS A TRAIL
YOU ARE NOT STARTING
FROM SCRATCH

Or repeat all of these and add more as they come to mind, as needed throughout the context of the day.

I HAVE TIME
I HAVE WEALTH TO SHARE
I WILL BE HEARD AS LONG AS I TAKE TIME
TO ARTICULATE
I WILL TAKE TIME
ASK FOR FEEDBACK

A cool down from the studio:

End with a big breath, and, while exhaling, drop the upper torso forward, bending at the waist, pointing the crown to the ground with your arms dangling there too, chin tucked in, and look between your legs to see the studio upside down. If there is work to be seen in the room, look at that upside down, too. Take another deep breath in this position, exhale and bend deeper, ragdoll mode, loosen the lips by blowing out and letting them flap together and make that brrrrrrrrrrr noise, directing the noise at the work. Think, *you aren't all that matters, but you really matter, but you aren't all that matters, because not one thing is all that matters*, and you are in a constellation and you exist and I WILL BE BACK.

End.

Jess Henderson

THE WITCH DANCE WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

Mary Wigman was a radical, modern dance pioneer who rejected formalised techniques and instead focused on the expression of emotion. The use of dance improvisation as a tool for movement development has roots in her work. The mythology goes that she suffered terribly from depression and suicidal thoughts until one day she began a ritualistic dance and cured herself entirely.

The elements that define her style include the conviction that dance could be performed without music and that it could have the courage to be ugly.

For this warmup, we will loosely follow Wigman's *Hexentanz/Witch Dance:*

1. Open the *Witch Dance* video on your computer/iPad/a somewhat larger screen, set it to full screen and place the computer

on the ground as you sit on the ground, so you are on the same level.

2. With eyes closed, take three deep breaths and long exhales to ground yourself. Feel your shoulders sink down with each breath as tension is released. Set an intention of what you want to let go of, rid the body of, or conjure during your ritualistic dance.
3. Open your eyes and, whilst still sitting on the ground, press play on the *Witch Dance* video and begin following her movements, mimicking the dance as you perform it yourself.
4. It's important to not feel restricted. Do not be strict with yourself or feel as though you are doing it incorrectly – there are no right or wrongs. Allow yourself to follow the movements with the freedom to start improvising for yourself if you feel like it.
5. Keep in mind the *witchyness* of the dance as you perform it. What are you wanting to summon? What energy are you wanting to release?
6. At the end of the dance, lay on the ground like a starfish facing upwards and feel the movements you have made through your body. Close your eyes and take three deep inhales/exhales.
7. Now you are ready to get to the task at hand.

An option after completing the above instructions is to pick up a pen and notebook and automatically write for three pages, without stopping. Just let the writing flow out in 'free writing' style – absolutely whatever comes to mind.

Amy Gowen

THE WORDPLAY WARMUP

This warmup centres words.
It works well as an initial writing exercise, but can really be used at any time of day, for any type of activity. I find a lot of inspiration in the written word, and how language can come to us, and comfort us at the most unexpected times. I also enjoy the feeling of saying a word so many times, its meaning vanishes and it starts to feel squishy and strange...

For this warmup you will need a piece of paper, a pencil or pen.

Take a moment to survey your surroundings. Any objects, any people, any sounds, any smells. The temperature, the settling of the light.

Take a moment to ground yourself in your body, in your mind, in your breath.
How do you feel today?
Do you feel any tension?
Do you feel at ease?
Do you feel tired?
Do you feel energised?
Are you hot?
Are you cold?

Take a moment to familiarise yourself with yourself.

Close your eyes if you want to,
count to 8.
Now.
Take a pause.
What is the first word that comes to
your mind today?
Keep this word in your mind.
Hold this word tightly for 10 seconds.
Try and visualise it, feel it in your mouth.
Now consider.
How do I connect to this word?
Does the word “represent” me?
Does it represent my current emotions
or my feelings?
Does it represent something that has
happened in my day, or week?
Does it represent my present relationship
with myself?
Does this word often reoccur in my mind?
How does this word feel?
What’s its shape and texture?
Hold this word again in your mind for
10 seconds.

Take the piece of paper and pen and
write the word down.
Look at the word closely for 10 seconds.
Has the meaning of this word changed for you
now it has been written by your own hand, and
now you are face to face with it?
How can you embody this word?
How can you mold it to understand it better,
to understand yourself better.
Now say and repeat the word out loud 5 times.

Now write the word down 5 times on the piece of paper.
As you write, is the word changing?
Is it morphing? Is it evolving?
Is it in flux?
Or does it remain the same?
Take a moment now to sit, relax and stare at the words in front of you.
Meditate upon it, soak it in, embody it, own it.
Fold up the paper as small as you can, so the word is no longer visible,
and place it somewhere out of sight.
Now please close your eyes.
Hold the word again in your mind for 10 seconds
Now softly whisper the word to yourself.
Firstly as the entire word.
Pause.
Then by each of its syllables (if more than one).
Pause. Then every letter.
Pause.
Allow the word to softly, slowly float away from you.
Say goodbye to it.

You can now open your eyes.

Joseph Baan

THE SLUG WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

Lie on the floor on your back, and take 10 slow, deep breaths. As you breathe, feel the weight of your body shifting and pressing against the floor. The floor is solid and supportive, it knows how to carry your moving body.

Slowly, begin to introduce movement into your body. You can begin with small movements, for example wiggling your toes or fingers, or rolling your head from side to side. Then, begin to introduce bigger movements, such as moving your leg, or shifting onto your side. The move–ment can be slow, almost imperceptible, but it is important that you move continuously, without stopping into stillness. While you move, try and keep as much of your body as possible on the floor. Try and spread the entirety of your skin – the body's largest organ – across the floor's surface. Keep moving, shifting, turning, all the while maintaining contact with the ground, feeling gravity pulling and pushing the different parts of your body.

Do this until each part and every inch of your body has touched the floor, or until you feel like it is enough.

Jess Henderson

THE STANDING DOODLES WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

1. Take a piece of plain paper (ideally A3 if you have it, A4 will do – or even take a cardboard box and pull it apart into an open piece of card) to a high enough surface that you stand level with it. If you need to use books to create a higher surface upon a small table, stack some up – get creative! Maybe your kitchen bench is high enough to stand at.
2. Once you are standing at your designated spot, with pen and paper in front of you, put on a song you really like and always feel inspired to dance to.
3. Doodle on the page, free and automatic style whilst standing and moving your body however feels good along with the music.
4. Consider channelling words or phrases into your doodles. You might be surprised by what comes out. Maybe the lyrics of the song affect your mind and hand, compelling you to doodle in response to the song.
5. Scrunch and release the toes. Lift up onto the balls of your feet and down again.

Get the whole body – especially the mid and lower parts – involved in the flow of the doodling.

6. Doodle until the song is over. If you feel like it, do another round with the same song or a different one.
7. Hang this doodle on the wall in the toilet room for one week, and see if it affects you subliminally over those seven days.

Manuela Viezzer

THE PRAGMATIST'S WARMUP AND COOLDOWN ALL DAY LONG

1. walk, early in the morning and late in the evening

Morning:

2. organise your thoughts.
3. look at the sky,
4. if you are close to water look at the water
5. if you are walking in a forest, look at the tree tops
6. find calm inside
7. put any thoughts in order
8. start your intellectual work.

Evening:

1. go through your day
2. name and try to let go of whatever has disappointed you
3. be proud of what has turned out the way you wanted it to

4. imagine what will come next, prepare for the next day.

If you work with your hands,
(ceramics, drawing or other):

1. start by preparing the materials
2. doodle
3. play with your materials,
4. when you have finished, spend some time cleaning up.
5. while you clean, imagine what will come next
6. take notes for yourself for your next session.

Jess Henderson

THE CHEWING GUM HUM

For this warmup the following things are required.

- *Chewing gum (alternatives could be fresh ginger, gummy sweets, or cardamom seeds)*
- *Outdoor space, or, if not possible, an indoor area with enough space to shake your arms and legs about.*
- *Music and headphones. If you can be somewhere and play music without headphones or through a speaker – feel free!*

If you don't have them all it's okay, be creative when thinking of alternatives!

A note on the music: We are going to be humming, making oral noises, and if one feels like it, singing. A recommended playlist to draw from is *Jazz Scatting* (1) with many beautiful additions from Queen Ella Fitzgerald. For another fun song, try *Dreadlock Holiday* (2) by 10cc.

(1)

(2)

1. Head outside with all your necessary equipment. Find a nice spot where you feel comfortable to hum and move freely. If indoors, clear some space for you to move around.
2. Put in your headphones or prepare the speaker with your chosen song.
3. Pop the chewing gum in your mouth and push play.
4. Chew the gum and hum, make sounds, sing, experiment with your vocals, swing your arms and legs and move your body along with the song
5. Let the chewing motion and minty freshness cleanse the mouth and release any tension held in the jaw. Imagine the fun sounds, menthol mouth sensations and wild body swaying as a way to leave behind the day and any unwanted feelings – letting go of any of the day's retention, ready to enter a new space and state.
6. Continue to chew, hum, dance and move for the duration of the song. Let it enter your body. Try closing your eyes and releasing any reservations of looking or feeling silly.
   Be free.
7. If it feels good, put on another song or repeat the same one for a second time.
8. When this warmup ritual is over. Spit out the gum and bury it outside. Leave the tensions behind as you return to the task you've now warmed up (or let loose) for.

Elisa Lemma

THE BACH WARMUP

Encounter Bach music every morning. Play it if you can, or else listen to it.
There is something about the patterns, repeating, intertwining, always different but always the same,
It is exactly this balance between the new and the familiar that your brain needs.
It has a way of growing from within, from itself, like a spiral

Do timeconsuming things that have no practical sense. Lying down in the morning sun, switching off your phone is a way of reminding yourself that you still have time, you possess time.

Do a yoga breath sequence: Lay down with your knees bent, start to breathe through your stomach keeping your chest still and then continue by moving the chest up and down. Create a ball of air in your belly and move it up and down. Then stay still. Breathing as you wish for as long as you want.

l0 xen0

THE CORP-O-RATE SETTING COLLECTION

Warmup: it‘s so easy to forget one another’s humanity. Before talking about tasks, take some time to talk about a book someone read recently.

Cooldown: Take a walk around the block or go outside for a moment, especially after a heated group discussion. Like a cigarette break (cigarettes optional). It gives space to work out disagreements on technical or political matters but still feel connected as people or as a team.

Warmup/Cooldown: any sort of movement or stretching, really. Especially with computer work, we move far less than feels good…

Cooldown: Take a breath and say “I feel …”

Cooldown: Empty your brain: write down anything and everything that is still hanging, or unresolved. Write it down somewhere you trust (a special notebook or a special private document at work) as a little “letter to your future self” – maybe for tomorrow or for a week or a month or a year from now.

Jess Henderson

THE ASEMIC WRITERS CLUB WARMUP

The following things are required for this warmup:

- *Blank paper (A4 or A3) – you might want to have multiple pieces of paper at hand*
- *A range of black marker pens – different weights, thicknesses, nib-types, etc.*

For this warmup we will be practising asemic writing, in the form of a notice from the *Asemic Writers Club* – a fictional group in which anyone and everyone is a member, including you.

What is asemic writing?

- *Writing that is asemic has no specific semantic content. It can be used to build fictional worlds, express experiences, and transcribe emotion, or nothing much at all.*
- *Due to the absence of semantic content, asemic writing offers a vacuum of meaning to be filled in by both the writer and reader as they feel, decide, and desire.*
- *By reflecting known techniques for writing, but not completely existing as a traditional writing system itself, asemic writing seeks to make the reader hover in a state between reading and looking.*

- *Asemic writing has no verbal sense, though it may have clear textual sense.*
- *The artform is still writing and depends on a reader's prior sense and knowledge of writing systems for it to make sense. This said, it can still be understood through aesthetic intuition.*
- *True asemic writing occurs when the creator of the asemic piece cannot read their own asemic writing. Asemic writing seems to be a gigantic, unexplored territory. Most people make asemic writing at some point, possibly when testing a new pen.*
- *With its meaning open, every viewer can arrive at a personal, absolutely correct interpretation.*

1. Away from a computer screen, perhaps laying on the floor, prepare your blank paper and pens in front of you. If you like, check out examples of asemic writing online before you move away from the screen.
2. Decide what format of notice from the *Asemic Writers Club* you will take as your departure point. Some ideas include: a letter from the editor, a newspaper front page, a digital newsletter format, a printed email, a poster, an essay, an interview (the options are endless, it's up to you!).
3. With the enjoyment of freehand writing, feel a channelling as you sweep your pen across the page, begin 'writing' *asemically*

your notice in the format chosen.*

4. Leave behind any feelings of pressure to make something beautiful or meaningful. There are no right or wrongs, asemic writing is just freedom of expression of the hand.
5. Once your piece is finished, leave it on the floor for the day or consider putting it in an envelope and posting it mysteriously to a friend or person who is on your mind.

* Optional: Set a timer for 5–10 minutes to work on your asemic notice if you like. Or, simply work on your notice until you feel it is done.

Jess Henderson

SERENDIPITY STRIKES WARMUP

The following things are required for this warmup:

- *Blank paper (A4 or A3) – you might want to have multiple pieces of paper at hand*
- *Pens, markers, pencils – whichever you choose and prefer*
- *Access to a range of books, magazines, or newspapers. Three will do.*

1. Away from a computer screen, perhaps laying on the floor, prepare your blank paper and pens before you.
2. Close your eyes and doodle on the page. Think in numbers – which numbers come to you? Do this for a duration of time that feels natural, and stop when you're ready.
3. Open your eyes and look at the page. Which number jumps out at you? Maybe it is even an abstract scribble that reminds you of a number.
4. With this number in mind (we will call it 'your number'), head to your books. Use your intuition to select whichever book you are drawn to.
5. Turn the book to the page of your number.

6. Here you are meeting your serendipity. Something drew you to that number, that book, that page.
7. Read the page or look at the image on it. Notice what jumps out, what resonates.
8. Now with that open page by your side, return to your paper and pens and set a timer for 10 minutes. Begin automatic writing or sketching (free flowing, no objective) for those 10 minutes, non-stop until the time is up.
9. Notice what these moments of serendipity have provoked, contemplate if they would have come up otherwise. Consider what new pathways they may have opened.
10. Set aside the writing/sketching and get ready for the task of the day you have at hand. Revisit your serendipity page again tomorrow and see how it makes you feel or what it conjures.

Riccardo Acciarino

THE CLARINET CONCERT WARMUP

To open the lungs, take deep breaths in and long exhales out (as if you were blowing on a clarinet), trying to keep the tension on the lips, on the diaphragm and the abs, whilst simultaneously releasing all the tension on the shoulders, fingers, chest and arms.

The blowing has to stay as linear as possible (and thus the note).

Then warm up the fingers, imitating musical scales and moving between all the different positions in the lightest way possible.

Remember that the ground is your best friend and the only stable thing you are connected to at the time of the concert you are performing. Close your eyes for a few seconds and imagine a small but very shiny light on the horizon, then picture it moving to the end of the room where the last person in the audience is seated in your imaginary solo show. Mentally play a final note in your clarinet directly to them.

l0 xen0

THE HEARTBEAT WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

Take a piece of paper and a pen. Close your eyes. Place one hand on your heart. With the pen in your other hand, tap the paper so you create one mark for every heartbeat. Repeat for 2 minutes.

E.S

THE THALAMUS HYPNOSIS, OR ANOTHER GUIDED MEDITATION

With your eyes open or closed, use your imagination to move from booth to booth, from cabin to cabin, from one confined space to the next. Keep going until you end up in the relay station of almost all your senses; break free in a vast inner space.

You are invited to listen to the following meditation as you make your way through this exercise: https://youtu.be/QIYgeIC-Yxc.

Dorothea Deli

THE TAROT READING COOLDOWN

For this warmup you will need a deck of tarot cards.

Take a set of tarot cards and look for the magician. Take out the card that is right in front of the magician and the one right behind it. Look up their meanings and try to make connections with whatever you intend to do after this warmup.

The tarot cards show that things are never black and white and that every weakness is also a strength. They open up the space of the in–between. A place, where more is possible, than usually assumed. Dare to open up to the dark, to the ridiculous, to the stupid, to the emptiness, to the void in what we call reality and pure joy. Here is the place where your will manifests, as well as the matters that relate to your own principles, standards and desires.

Connect to your very private and authentic self with the help of the tarot cards and try to feel inspired in some way. This could be by encoun–tering a set of colours, textures, smells, tastes, sounds, forms, objects, animals, feelings, values, beliefs that are familiar or unfamiliar. By doing this, try to decide upon one thing that inspires

you right now and that reflects who you are. This “thing” of inspiration will help you settle into whatever task follows this warmup. This “thing” represents who you are, but in a way that no-one else will ever understand. And that is fine. It is yours alone and is something precious that connects you to a world that is neither black nor white – it is complex and precise at the same time, just like you.

l0 xen0

THE INTEROCEPTION WARMUP/ COOLDOWN

Take a piece of paper and a pen. With your eyes closed, draw your body, including the organs that you feel activated inside of you, too. This is an open-ended exercise. Stop as soon as you feel you have completed a sketch of your body and then open your eyes.

SoC LAB series
WARMUPS AND COOLDOWNS

HumDrumPress is a collaboration-based publisher. Roles and responsibilities are therefore shared by all parties, within their capacities. The following persons contributed, in a multitude of ways, to making this publication possible: Riccardo Acciarino, Joseph Baan, Wibke Bramesfeld, Dorothea Deli, Amy Gowen, Jess Henderson, Lili Huston-Herterich, I0 xen0, Elisa Lemma, Engy Mohsen, Eirini Sourgiadaki, Manuela Viezzer

Paper: 120gr Offset
Typefaces: Aspekta by Ivo Dolenc
Apfel Grotesk by Luigi Gorlero, Collletttivo
Second Edition, print run of 30

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AUTHORS, 2023

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